



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## Edinburgh Research Explorer

### Developing decision-making expertise in trainee sport and exercise psychologists

**Citation for published version:**

Smith, M, McEwan, HE, Tod, D & Martindale, A 2019, Developing decision-making expertise in trainee sport and exercise psychologists: Supervisor perspectives. in *BASES Conference 2019*. Journal of Sports Sciences, Taylor & Francis, BASES Conference 2019, Leicester, United Kingdom, 19/11/19.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2019.1671688>

**Digital Object Identifier (DOI):**

[10.1080/02640414.2019.1671688](https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2019.1671688)

**Link:**

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

**Document Version:**

Peer reviewed version

**Published In:**

BASES Conference 2019

**Publisher Rights Statement:**

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in the Journal of Sports Sciences ( on 8/11/2019, available online: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02640414.2019.1671688>.

**General rights**

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

**Take down policy**

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact [openaccess@ed.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@ed.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



## **Developing decision-making expertise in trainee sport and exercise psychologists: Supervisor perspectives**

Michelle Smith<sup>1\*</sup>, Hayley E. McEwan<sup>1</sup>, David Tod<sup>2</sup>, & Amanda Martindale<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of the West of Scotland, <sup>2</sup> Liverpool John Moores University, and <sup>3</sup> University of Edinburgh

\*Corresponding author: [michelle.smith@uws.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.smith@uws.ac.uk)  
@MichelleSmithMS

Decision-making is an important skill for sport and exercise psychology practitioners, because decisions made by the practitioner hold an influential role in the selection, design, and implementation of successful interventions. Supervisors have been considered an influence on the development of practitioner decision-making, however, little is known about how decision-making expertise is developed during training. Therefore, the aim of this study was to examine how UK sport and exercise psychology supervisors developed decision-making expertise in trainee sport and exercise psychologists (TSEPs) during their 2-year training qualification. After receiving university ethical approval, 6 UK sport and exercise psychology supervisors (male, n = 6) participated in semi-structured interviews. Participants were enrolled on the Register of Applied Psychology Practice Supervisors (RAPPS) and currently supervising TSEPs on the British Psychological Society Qualification in Sport and Exercise Psychology (QSEP; Stage 2). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and a reflexive thematic analysis applied based on a decision-making framework. Supervisors encouraged self-discovery in TSEPs, which developed analytical reasoning. Person-centred approaches were accommodating to the development of analytical reasoning. For example, allowing TSEPs to discover their own solutions to client difficulties through a supportive, empowering supervisory relationship. Essentially, participants were helping TSEPs to develop a cognitive representation of how the selected approach may be applied in their own client consultations. The development of analytical reasoning prepared TSEPs to make decisions at both the programme and intervention level of practice where they explored different options that could be applied to client cases. This model of supervision that mirrors a person-centred model of therapy could also prepare TSEPs for making decisions in an ill-structured and dynamic environment (e.g., at a session level) that is typical of applied sport psychology practice.